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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of our friend and colleague, former Illinois State Senator Ray Soden of Wood Dale, who passed away on July 22, 2012; and

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WHEREAS, Ray Soden was born on March 26, 1924, in Chicago; and

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WHEREAS, Ray Soden served his country as a member of the United States Navy during World War II, having enlisted soon after the bombing of Pearl Harbor; during his service with the Navy, he served as a Sonarman 3rd Class on the USS Claxton and took part in the invasion of North Africa in November of 1942, and, in the Pacific Theater, he saw action in Okinawa, Saipan, Guam, Leyte Gulf, and Iwo Jima; he was the recipient of the European and Asiatic Campaign Medals and 7 Battle Stars for his service; and

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WHEREAS, Following his military service, Ray Soden returned to Illinois and went to work for the Illinois Bell Telephone Company, where he was employed for 35 years until his retirement in 1982; and

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WHEREAS, Ray Soden dedicated his life to public service and

1 was active in many levels of local, county, and State
2 government; he served as a member of the DuPage County Board
3 from 1982 to 1992, and served as president of the Forest
4 Preserve District of DuPage County from 1988 to 1992; in 2003,
5 he was appointed to a seat in the Illinois Senate following the
6 retirement of former Senate President James "Pate" Philip;
7 during his tenure in the Senate, he served on the Senate
8 Revenue Committee; after serving the remainder of Senator
9 Philip's term, he chose not to run for re-election; and

10 WHEREAS, During his 20 months as State Senator, Ray Soden
11 earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues by handling
12 his duties with the ease and aplomb of a veteran lawmaker;
13 lawmakers and staff knew Senator Soden as a friendly person
14 whose gentlemanly elegance evoked a more gracious era and his
15 easy smile and kindness were appreciated during long hours of
16 debate on the Senate floor; and

17 WHEREAS, Ray Soden was very active in the field of
18 veterans' affairs; he was a lifelong member of Tioga Post 2149,
19 Veterans of Foreign Wars; as a member of the VFW, he rose
20 through the ranks of the local, State, and national
21 organizations and served as the National Commander-in-Chief of
22 the VFW from 1973 to 1974; he served as chairman of the Voice
23 of Democracy Committee, vice-chairman of the National Security
24 and Foreign Affairs Committee, and chairman of the National

1 Bicentennial Committee; he served on the National Convention
2 Committee and served as President of the VFW National
3 Convention Corporation; and

4 WHEREAS, Ray Soden was active in many civic projects and
5 was a member of several civic organizations, including the
6 Lions and Kiwanis; he was president of the Oak Park and
7 Bensenville Lions Clubs and the Telephone Pioneers; he was
8 named Wood Dale Citizen of the Year in 2001; and

9 WHEREAS, Ray Soden was an accomplished singer who performed
10 on the National Barn Dance program on WLS-AM and shared the
11 microphone with such stars as George Gobel, Lulabelle and
12 Scotty, Homer and Jethro, Red Foley, and Andy Williams; and

13 WHEREAS, Ray Soden is survived by his loving wife of 65
14 years, Shirley; his children, Raylene (Dennis) Boyd, Kirk
15 (Roxanne) Soden, and Pat (Greg) Breeze; his grandchildren, Dawn
16 (Steve) Wedll, Douglas (Michelle) Barger III, Michael
17 (Elizabeth) Boyd, James (Jennifer) Breeze, Dianne (Peter)
18 Pecharich, and Kristy (Todd) Wyatt; his 10
19 great-grandchildren; and his many nieces and nephews;
20 therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SEVENTH GENERAL
22 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with

1 his family and friends, the passing of Ray Soden; and be it
2 further

3 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
4 presented to the family of Ray Soden as an expression of our
5 sympathy.